It is a commonplace that modern civilisation is an amalgam of three elements. From Rome we have received our conceptions of law, and to some extent of politics. From Greece—operating sometimes through Pvome—we have our philosophy, as well as our aesthetic standards, whether in literature or in the other arts. And to Israel, the western world owes its religion and its ethics.[1]

The basis of tho Hebraic contribution to Western civilisation, and the Hebrew's greatest gift to humanity, is the ideal of the One God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. According to the Biblical account, this conception, familiar to the Patriarchs, was reaffirmed to their descendants at the foot of Mount Sinai; according to the critical view, it was a gradual discovery, fully realised only some centuries later. In any case, it is fundamental to a consideration of the Hebraic clement in modern life. Greek and Indian thinkers may have had a glimmering of the same truth. Only the Hebrew proclaimed it aloud, adhered to it through persecution and vilification, yielded up his life for its sake, and made it central to his whole existence. The Jews of to-day, adhering to the monotheistic tradition of their fathers, number sonic sixteen million souls. But, through Jesus and Paul, the Hebraic teaching (in a modified form, yet basically identical) passed to Europe, and is now cherished by (550,000,000 Christians throughout the world. Six centuries later, it was reiterated in Arabia, with desert

sternness, by Mohammed, and is now the creed of 220,000,000 Muslims. The kernel of both religions is the tense declaration which the Hebrews believed to be uttered by the Deity Himself

[1] To this conventional tripartite division may be addod tho modern contribution of technical efficiency, which constitute tho outward shell (too often confused with tho substance) of proHWit-day dvilinatmn. In thin, JOVVB, as individuals, have played a noteworthy part, which wil3 bo considered in detail in later chapters of this book.